

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Gatehouse Development Initiative,
30 September 2009 Community Centre**

Present: J Morton; J Jameson; A Johnson; S Harris; R Forster; P Addison; N Coombey; D Steel (Chair); K Smyth

Apologies: H Oxley; I Burnie; W McKie

2. Minutes of July: Approved

3. Matters Arising: None.

4. Cally Old School House. Nic Coombey of Solway Heritage presented his report on options for the future of the old school house which is now in an unstable condition and currently fenced off for safety. Nic has done a thorough initial survey of the building. There are four options put forward for its future. 1 - Leave it as it is, fenced off, to decay; 2 - Demolish it to about two feet above ground which retains its presence and footprint; 3 - Stabilise the current building - remove plant growth, record all remaining architectural and internal detail, repoint the stonework, replace damaged lintels, protect the wall head and provide interpretation info in the shell; 4 - Restore the building as a house - it has sufficient height to allow for a second story - possible use as a holiday home. Solway Heritage propose option 3 as the most appropriate at present. This would secure the building for possible later further restoration; given the Historic Landscape importance of Cally it is an appropriate option. Based on other similar work an estimate of £19000 for carrying out the necessary work was suggested. A number of funders are possible for this project. The meeting agreed that option 3 is most appropriate. The agreement of the Forestry Commission will be required to progress now, as they will as owners bear responsibility for maintaining the stabilised shell. D Steel thanked Nic for his work and an excellent report.

5. Local Plan. Community input to the next Local Plan is being sought. Affordable housing provision in Gatehouse, and the need for additional commercial units were both highlighted in the CADISPA report. The Housing Sub-group is stalled on progress as Jamie Dent has been away for some time. J Jameson and R Forser will try to get things moving again on this front. It is thought there is a self build project being looked at. J Jameson will speak to the DGHP to get their view on the minimum number of dwellings they would be willing to support as a development. It was reported that the Murray Usher Foundation has received £16000 to help with the refurbishment of the Fleetside Units. It was noted again that the Garage site would be an excellent location for a light industrial/commercial/residential development.

6. Finance. W McKie was unable to attend the meeting but his report was tabled.

Bank balances:

- Main Account £10000 (After allowing for all known liabilities. Of these funds, approximately £7200 are Restricted)
- No.2 Cally Boundaries Account £2940 (the next claim on Leader+ will add approximately £1880 to No.2 Account funds)

Financial report:

- Annual accounts for 2008 were presented and approved at the AGM and the Accountant's invoice for preparing the Accounts has been settled..
- Grant funds of £1025 for the Community Centre have yet to be drawn down..
- There have been no significant changes to either restricted or unrestricted funds since the last GDI meeting
- Pending the outcome of maintenance on the wind turbine and the likely costs expected in order to restore full working, and as a prudent temporary measure, there will be a freeze on any fresh expenditure from unrestricted funds.

VAT matters

- Accountants have recommended that, subject to there being no objection from

OSCR and the Inland Revenue, it will be possible to de-register the GDI for VAT if the electricity component of GDI business is transferred to a separate subsidiary company whose business would remain liable for VAT but be wholly owned by GDI. The costs of implementing this arrangement would be manageable i.e. around £500. Removing the liability for VAT from the parent GDI company would be a considerable administrative advantage.

7. Projects.

Cally Designed Landscape. A visit has taken place with Tim Rollinson, Director General of the Forestry Commission, who met with David Steel, Ron Forster and Ken Smyth. Gatehouse is a good example of the Commission and local community working together. The Director General visited a section of restored wall, discussed interpretation panels to better highlight aspects of the woods to visitors, and the need to ensure better integration of forestry support - heavy equipment, diggers etc with the project workers and contractors already engaged in the projects. Ron Forster reported that the chipper had been in the woods shredding some of the piles of material removed from around the paths. The walls project is going very well - ahead of schedule. There has been some delay with interpretation support.

Country Market. A meeting is still awaited with the Council to discuss options for the car park. Nothing further to report.

Walks. The consultation period for the Core Paths Network finishes in early October, after which the final report will be produced. The Council appear to have adopted most of the requests from the community for inclusion.

Website. News items being added as requested. Otherwise running smoothly.

AOB. Snowdrop Festival. The Forestry Commission have agreed to produce the board free of charge to match their own panels.

Date of next meeting. 25 November 2009, Community Centre.